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K Cooper
2-7-98

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s): KATO, et al.

Filed: December 16, 1999

For: VACUUM PROCESSING APPARATUS AND OPERATING
METHOD THEREFOR

jc564 U.S. PTO
09/461432
12/16/99

FIRST INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
UNDER 37 CFR 1.97 & 1.98

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

December 16, 1999

Sir:

Pursuant to Applicants' duty of disclosure, enclosed please find a List of documents cited in connection with prior applications of the above-identified application. The listed documents were cited in at least one of the following U.S. patent applications for which benefit has been claimed under 35 USC 120 in the above-identified application:

- (1) Application Serial No. 09/177,495, filed October 23, 1998;
- (2) Application Serial No. 09/061,062, filed April 16, 1998;
- (3) Application Serial No. 07/751,951, filed August 29, 1991, now U.S. Patent No. 5,314,509, issued May 24, 1994;
- (4) Application Serial No. 08/096,256, filed July 26, 1993, now U.S. Patent No. 5,349,762, issued September 27, 1994;
- (5) Application Serial No. 08/443,039, filed May 17, 1995, now U.S. Patent No. 5,553,396, issued September 10, 1996;
- (6) Application Serial No. 08/593,870, filed January 30, 1996, now U.S. Patent No. 5,661,913, issued September 2, 1997; and
- (7) Application Serial No. 08/882,731, filed June 26, 1997.

In particular, note that each of these listed documents cited in connection with prior applications, was cited in

application Serial No. 09/177,495, filed October 23, 1998.

The listed documents have been cited in connection with at least one prior application of the above-identified application for which priority has been claimed under 35 USC 120; accordingly, copies of the listed documents are not enclosed.

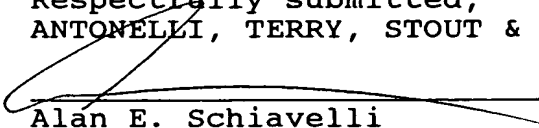
Of the listed documents, attention is particularly directed to the teachings of U.S. Patent No. 4,836,905 to Davis, et al.

In view of all of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all requirements of 37 CFR §1.97 and §1.98 have been satisfied, in connection with the documents on the enclosed List. Accordingly, consideration of the listed documents, upon further examination of the above-identified application, is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR § 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Deposit

Account No. 01-2135 (Case No. 503.30414C14) and please credit any excess fees to such Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,
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AES/slk
Enclosures